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CFIA Launched Consultations on New Food Regulations

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Report Highlights:

On June 4, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) launched consultation on the new food regulations to be developed under the Safe Food for Canadians Act. On the same day, CFIA opened consultations for labeling modernization. In parallel, CFIA presented its new approach towards compliance promotion and outcome-based regulation.

On June 4, 2013, CFIA organized a [Food Safety Regulatory Forum](#) gathering some 300 industry, government, academia and consumer group representatives.

Food Regulations

At this event, CFIA launched consultations on the **New Food Regulations** to be developed under the Safe Food for Canadians Act. A 50-page ["discussion paper"](#) was submitted for consultation and is attached to this report.

This represents the very first step in a consultation process that is planned to extend over the next 18 months, as the ideas get crystallized and the food regulations are developed. The initial engagement process opened on June 4th and will run until **October 31, 2013**.

Feedback can be provided to CFIA, quoting "**regulatory framework**," as follows:

- By email: CFIA-Modernisation-ACIA@inspection.gc.ca
- By mail:

Strategic Partnerships Division
1400 Merivale Road, Tower 1
Floor 6, suite 218
Ottawa, ON K1A 0Y9
Canada

Attn: regulatory framework

- By fax: 613-773-5606

In terms of next steps, and based on information available today, it is expected that Canada will release a "food regulations statement of regulatory intent," in the spring of 2014, which will be submitted for further consultations. In the fall of 2014, CFIA intends to submit a "final draft for food regulations" for formal consultations. Finally, in January 2015, the new food regulations are expected to come into force.

Labeling Modernization

CFIA's Food Safety Forum also marked the beginning of consultations on the **review of labeling regulations**. A ["discussion paper"](#) for Food Labeling Modernization was submitted during the Forum and is also attached to this report.

Feedback can be provided to CFIA until **December 2013** by using the same coordinates described above, but quoting "**food labeling modernization**."

It is important to note that this labeling modernization initiative, while it will include all foods, will **only cover** most (but not all) of the regulations under CFIA authority, such as list of ingredients, grade marks, common name, standards of identity, etc.

Labeling modernization will **not cover** labeling regulations under Health Canada's responsibility, such as: nutrition, health claims, allergens, genetically modified foods, novel foods, additives, fortification, food safety, etc. It will also not cover labeling regulations under another government department's responsibility, for instance Industry Canada, Competition Bureau, etc. Finally, it will also not cover labeling regulations under CFIA responsibility which have been recently developed or revise, such as organic products, cheese or icewine. All this information is included in the consultation documents prepared by CFIA.

As indicated, the initial consultation process will run until December 2013. In terms of next steps, CFIA has indicated it expects to issue "draft recommendations" for further consultation in the spring of 2014. In December 2014, a final draft is supposed to be submitted. The intent is to have the new labeling changes in force by June 2015.

Compliance Promotion and Outcome-based Regulation

In addition to these two consultation initiatives presented above (on food regulations and labeling modernization), the Food Safety Forum offered CFIA the opportunity to present two other new initiatives. These will run across all current and future CFIA regulatory initiatives, and they will not be necessarily specific to food safety. CFIA presented:

- a. A "discussion paper" on **Compliance Promotion** (attached). Although at this moment the paper focuses on food safety, the model will be used in the future for plant and animal health as well. The compliance promotion strategy will be developed in parallel with the new food regulations and consultations will occur periodically. The intent is to have a set of compliance promotion tools in place by the end of 2014.
- b. A "discussion paper" on **Outcome-based Regulation** (attached). This initiative marks a shift in CFIA's approach, meant to move away from prescriptive regulation and go towards an outcome-based model.

Feedback on these two initiatives can be provided to CFIA using the coordinates listed earlier in the report and quoting, respectively, "**compliance promotion**" and "**outcome-based approach**."

IFS Regulations

Finally, with respect to the **Imported Food Sector Products Regulations**, CFIA indicated during the Food Safety Forum that the intent remains to publish the draft regulations in Canada Gazette part I "this year," although there is no firm date set. Once in Canada Gazette I, a 75-day consultation period will follow.

